

PICURES ON MAIN SCREENS OF VAUDEVILLE

High Lights and Shadows in News of Screen Drama

Producer Finds New Way to Get Young Men to Invest in the Movies.

By FRANK VREELAND.

A NEW method has been discovered of getting young men with plenty of money and plenty of time in which to figure out ways of spending it to rally to the support of the movies. A certain producer, who has quite a club or two, has developed the habit of dropping into one of his clubs and gently warming up the subject of movies in conversation. Then, as he notices the men near him showing signs of life and interest, he begins shooting statistics at them—and statistics are usually their vulnerable spot.

He tells them how much money "The Birth of a Nation" made, and that hits them between the eyes. When they are gasping for air he plays his trump card—he springs on them the picture of the pretty girl who is going to yield her charms to the camera for him, and the lightning of her smiles has struck even elderly men in the club as known to brighten up at sight of her.

Then the producer tells them that he won't hold anything back on them—he'll let them invest in the company. For \$25 they can not only buy a share of stock, but they can even watch the making of the film as it is being produced at a fashionable summer place familiar to all of them, and if they behave themselves they'll be allowed to work as extras in the picture and maybe get a chance to speak to the lovely star. It is surprising how many of them not only buy stock but actually take no trouble to find an excuse for being at the place mentioned.

There they have a chance to gaze into the eyes of the enchantress and do their best at impressing men of money and leisure. They are allowed to work before the camera for only a few days, possibly because the strain of being in the company of the lovely star is considered too much for them. And anyhow, they would probably be expected to pay about \$20,000 for the privilege of working right through the picture.

And—here's the catch in the story, unusual in schemes for floating movie concerns—it's a bona fide venture. The producer is a man with a good reputation behind him, he is actually making a picture which he has every intention of selling, and the wealthy "extras" stand a substantial chance of getting more than mere smiles out of their investment.

"Out in Los Angeles," says an actor who grew up in that city and is now pushing art on the speaking stage here, "one certainly finds the player's paradise, with actors riding around in automobiles and having homes so beautiful they're afraid to enter them. Wide spaces are all around, and they inveigle actors into leading an open air healthy life without their knowing it. The sunshine is wonderful—you can be sure if the morning is clear that you can go off on a picnic all day without wearing yourself out putting up the one man top. You can get all the sunshine you want, and that's just the trouble. You get too much of it; it grows beautifully monotonous."

"All these lovely allurements prove but a delusion and a snare for a new player, but there nearly breaking his back. He goes out there with a contract from Famous Players-Lasky at \$500 a week for a year, and he looks around at the handsome homes of the film folk and says to himself, 'I'm a good man, he is. So he starts by buying a house, a dollar store and a dollar whenever you turn around. Then he drops into a furniture store and puts a sofa on his credit. Some more bills at instalment rates. He gets himself tangled up in some fixings—there are merchants out there just laying traps for that kind of player."

"Before he's through he's loaded up with \$50,000 worth of stuff, with only a year's work provided for in his contract. And he's got to pay for it. He looks forward to after that pay check. That's why so many players, though they seem to be investing in good solid property out there, aren't really saving anything and have been caused by the slackening in pictures with scarcely enough to get a half cut. I've met movie chaps out there who haven't been working for a year and who might better join Steinbrenner in the Arctic region with a chance of finding something to do."

The return of Charlie Chaplin emphasizes the fact that Syd Chaplin, his brother and manager has been lost in the dust of Hollywood, so far as the movie are concerned. Says the actor, "I'm sort of on the screen a year ago in 'King, Queen, Joker.' Years ago when Charlie and his brother were trying to get England to give them a living on the stage, Syd was considered the funny man of the pair. Charlie being merely his shadow, but now the elder brother has gone underground, cinematographically speaking. The principal reason for that is he's soaring above ground in the airplane business."

For a while, with his elaborate flying suit and his hissing machine, Syd Chaplin rode the sky as the aviator king of California. In a business that was easy compared to some of the stunts he has done in the movies. But just as the money was coming in, he was from the sky to the ground. He was a director, built a flying field near Chaplin's, and the air wasn't so free. However, there still is a patronage enough for all, as the movie actors and actresses are in the habit of going to the flying station at San Diego and taking an aerial trip to "La Juana" and laying out on the race track for the lack of a better way to kill time—and maybe themselves.

An interesting explanation has just been offered as to why Los Angeles is less anglo than Broadway. Stage players are part of the night life of this and other towns, and when they're tired their way of relaxing is to go to the both feet. They're often safe from temptation because when they're at liberty for it all the places are shut up, and they have to go to the movies. In Los Angeles, it is pointed out, the film players, after working all day are let loose on the night life at the same time as are all other folks but burglars. Having plenty of money in normal times, they're apt to ride high and free, especially after a hard day's work at the studio, and when all other amusements have closed for the night they often adjourn to a back yard swimming pool at a small place for a little relaxation. That's why Hollywood is so far from Holyrood.

It's perhaps not amiss to note that scandal just naturally seemed to happen in Los Angeles with the inception of the movies. One of the first companies there years ago had for start and director in its cowboy picture a cowboy who was a full blooded Indian, very full blooded. His wife heard that he had several strings to his bow, and he decided to go into permanent eclipse

'Doubling for Romeo' With Will Rogers and 'Two Minutes to Go' Feature Films



Charles Ray Appears in Role of Football Hero Earning His Way Through College.

AT the Capitol this week S. L. Rothafel is offering a gala programme in celebration of the second anniversary of the theatre. Goldwyn week being a simultaneous event, the Goldwyn production, starring Will Rogers in "Doubling for Romeo," holds the feature film position on the bill. The story is by Elmer Rice, Will Rogers and Will Shakespeare, a trio of authors, one of which is justly famous and the other two fairly so.

In "Doubling for Romeo" Mr. Rogers plays the role of a bashful cowboy lover who appears to make no headway with his love-making. He has not enough spirit and dash to suit his

in Mexico—very suddenly. His wife was an Indian too.

Speaking of the old time movies, —Maurice Costello, once the idol of the screen, is said to be around town looking for a chance to be a shadow of himself on the films once more. He did get into a picture lately in a subordinate part, but he seems to find it difficult to remain on the screen with any fluency. So transit gloria movie.

Skinner as Shylock At Fidelity Concert

The Actors' Fidelity League will give a concert at Henry Miller's Theatre this evening. One of the features will be the appearance of Otis Skinner as Shylock in a scene from "The Merchant of Venice," assisted by Curtis Cooksey as Bassanio, and Ben Johnson as Antonio. Another pretentious offering will be a historic playlet by Frank Ferguson, in which Miss Amelia Bingham will appear as Catherine II of Russia. The supporting cast will include Frank Sylvester, Robert Vaughn, Irene Messner and Celeste McCarthy.

There will also be a tabloid version of George M. Cohan's comedy "Broadway Jones," arranged for the league's performance. In the cast will be Earl J. Gilbert, Mrs. Adelaide Power, Richard Clarke and Miss Florence Curran. Other acts offered will be: Huston Ray, concert pianist; Baby Vivian Connors in out board and toe solo from "What's in a Name?"; Harry Truax and company in "Immortal Jones"; Lou Lockett and company from "Mary" in specialty dances; Edna as Eve in the "Garden of Eden"; a London grotesquerie; Dornah, classic dancer, in a sketch.

sweetheart, who suggests that he like himself off to the movies to learn how to make love. The picture includes Miss Sylvia Breamer, M. B. (Ledy) Flynn, Raymond Hatton and Sydney Almsworth. Clarence Badger directed the production.

A Goldwyn Sport Review called "Speed" throws some new light on the question of how fast is a mile and gives the answer in varying examples of speed vehicles. There will be short novelty cartoons and films especially made for this programme.

"Peter Ibbetson," starring Miss Elsie Ferguson and Wallace Reid, and the elaborate programme prepared by Hugo Rosenfeld, begin the second week of their extended engagement at the Criterion today.

"Two Minutes to Go," starring Charles Ray, will be presented at the Strand because it is timely to the college football season. Mr. Ray will be seen in the role of a college football hero, earning his way through college with a milk route. The film is from a story by Richard Andre. "Sunshine Mary" Anderson plays the leading female role. The other important characters

are Lionel Belmore, Lincoln Stedman and Truman Van Dyke. Among the other film features are "John Greenleaf Whittier," the first of a Great American series, and a new Marmaduke comedy, in which Lloyd Hamilton appears in a travesty called "Robinson Crusoe, Ltd."

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The first half of the week at the Sheridan Theatre, Seventh Avenue and Twelfth Street, William De Mille's production, "After the Show," will be presented, with Charles Chaplin in "The Idle Class." The second half Anna Q. Nilsson will appear in "Why Girls Leave Home."

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Last summer Mr. Baxter played in London the same part as he is now playing in "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife." Then it was he repeated the fruits of success from those years of training in varied and sundry productions.

Charles Ray Tells Why He Directs Own Movies

The experienced lovers of the photoplay art have often wondered why Charles Ray insists on directing his own productions. Likewise, they are at a loss to understand how it happens that he cannot find enough to do in acting the strenuous roles he invariably undertakes, but must also boss the entire company (and himself) around the studio lot.

The best solutions for these puzzles are herewith set forth by Charles Ray himself, after directing "Two Minutes to Go," in which he appears at the Strand next week.

"When I had a director," says Ray, "I found that we could not always agree on the interpretation of a certain scene or bit of action. I had my idea of it, he had his. We would retire to my dressing room to discuss it, and I would remonstrate—but I could not make him see it my way, and he could not make me see his. The result would be a tie, then perhaps a compromise, and I no longer felt the part."

"Now, if I'm certain about anything, I consult nobody but the camera. I take the scene, action or expression twice, often three times, and, of course, in two or three different ways, and I choose the one that seems the best. I don't want to appear temperamental, but I have my ideas!"

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Actor Bumped Into Stage Career by Earthquake

Charles Ruggles of 'Demi-Virgin' Took Up Acting After San Francisco Disaster.

Charles Ruggles of "The Demi-Virgin" at the Times Square Theatre is perhaps the only actor who can say that he was bumped into a stage career by the San Francisco earthquake. He was living in the California city when it began falling on his head.

"The first thing I thought of," he says, "was to run into the bathroom and fill up the tub with water; the second was to grab my bank book and run down to the bank to see if there was enough of it left to draw my money out. Turning on the faucet in a bathtub may not sound like much of a way to save life. But it was. With all the chimneys tumbling down around me unreasonably I figured the plumbing would go loco and water would soon be more valuable than booze is now. It was—there shot a man for stealing some out there. We were able to drink heartily a la bathtub, with a cupful stolen now and then for washing."

"My cousin was hurt a little in the quake, and the front of our house slid off without any fuss. My father said to me:

"Son, you'll have to shovel bricks off the street."

"I'd been taking a little light exercise working in a wholesale drug house. I said:

"Gee, dad, this is no work for me. I'm going to be an actor."

"Just the same, son," he said, "you're going to shovel bricks off the street."

Johns Repertory Company.

"So then I saw he was right. I'd never done any acting before, but I made a note that I was going to be an actor. Soon after I went to Long Beach, Cal., which is just about the size of Long Beach here—and joined a little repertory company there, telling them I had lost everything in the San Francisco disaster except the power to act."

The old manager was a typical theatrical mogul, with a top hat, cane and all the works, and he took me at my own word without any tryout when I said I could act, mainly because, I suppose, I could recite all the names of the San Francisco theatres by heart. Besides, it happened they were hard up for a juvenile—they must have been. The first week I played two parts for three days each, one of them the Squire in "David Garrick," and my cousin, who'd been active in amateur theatricals, coached me, so I didn't start any riot. I continued to play, making two parts weekly: went to El Paso, Tex., and played in stock there, and then went to Los Angeles and enjoyed a period of bonanza with the Oliver Morosco stock company."

Mr. Ruggles was in Los Angeles for a number of years, appearing in three movies for Morosco and watching the film industry grow up over his head. "I played in pictures actually only six weeks, with Cyril Maude and George Fawcett and later in support of myself," he says, "and I grew up right in the thick of the business and might have been in it up to my neck. My father and I had a chance to buy into the game at the starting line, but Wesley Ruggles, a director now, and we would have—it we'd had the money."

"I know the movie people well, and they're like a lot of nice children, who shouldn't be allowed to play with a gun. They work hard in spells, and then they have a lot of money and time on their hands. It's no wonder they run around loose and think the height of the sublime is to have an automobile with blue wheels and yellow shutters that looks like a billboard poster."

Fond of Athletics.

Outdoor life in Los Angeles developed in Ruggles a liking for athletics, and the last year he was runner-up in the national championship sports meet at which, he says, would get him down to ninety-four pounds if he accepted all the challenges he's received. Whenever he feels a headache or a cold coming on, he says, he always goes to a gym, and after a good workout for two or three hours at handball he finds he's walloped the cold or the headache out of himself.

"I'm a member of the Miller family, one of the best," he says, "and I've got a good workout for two or three hours at handball he finds he's walloped the cold or the headache out of himself."

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HETTY KING, LORD-AIN AND ARNOLD DALY IN VAUDEVILLE

Foreign and American Stars to Be Seen and Heard in the Variety Houses.

Another feature bill is announced by the Palace for this week, headed by Arnold Daly and William Norris, in "The Van Dyke," a comedy-drama adapted from the French by Cosmo Gordon Lennox. Mr. Daly comes here direct from his appearance at the Greenview Village Theatre.

Other stellar acts offered will be Charles King and Miss Lila Rhodes in "Took Your Horn," Miss Ruth Roy in character songs; Venita Gould, mimic; Hal Skelly and company in song, dance and comedy, and Nat Nazario, Jr., in a musical divertissement. The lesser lights on the bill include Pearson, Newport and Pearson, and McLallen and Carson.

The chief acts at other vaudeville houses follow:

RIVERSIDE—Miss Irene Bordoni, Ivan Bankoff and company.

COLONIAL—Eddie Leonard, Ben Welch.

FIRST STREET—Lighter Girls and Alexander and company, Doris Humphrey's Dancers.

ALHAMBRA—Daphne Pollard, "Parlor Bedroom and Bath."

HAMILTON—The Four Mortons, Carl Randall.

ROYAL—Morris Miershapp and Al Gorrard, Ed Gallagher and Al Shean.

PORCHAM—Audreyette Trio, Frank and Teddy Sabini.

PROCTOR'S FIFTH AVENUE—Mabel Taliaferro and company, Herman Timberg.

PROCTOR'S TWENTY-THIRD STREET—Princeton and Watson, comedy quartet.

PROCTOR'S FIFTY-EIGHT STREET—Alf Grant, North and Halliday.

PROCTOR'S ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIFTH STREET—Officer Hyman, Tennessee Ten.

International Stars In Shubert Programmes

What is called "a congress of international celebrities" composed of European and American variety artists is offered at the Winter Garden this coming week. Miss Hetty King, leading English male impersonator, Lord-Ain, Italian vocalist, singing in four ranges; the Lockfords, dancers from the Folies Bergere, Paris; Frank Fay and Bayonne and Walter Huston are among the headliners offered. Others will be Clark and Verdi, the Rigoletto Brothers, the Swanson Sisters, Bert Melrose, Talian and Newell and Jack Strouse.